



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

JOURNAL OF LEWIS BIRDSALL HARRIS, 1836-1842

What a tumult of ideas floated through my brain as I landed at the levee of this city connected in my mind with yellow fever and death for it was here that my father died of that dread disease and here his remains now rested but where I knew not and do not know how to look for them. What a busy scene the levee is, the water front presents all busy loading and unloading innumerable steamers, Negroes singing draymen yelling, sailors crying their sailor cries. All new to me as this is my first visit to a seaport city and the confusion is enough to drive one crazy. There are about 2000 drays constantly employed hauling all kinds of Merchandise to and from all kinds of crafts from immense sea going Ships and great Mississippi river Steamers to small boats plying on the river. The landing was so filled with Steam boats that it was several hours before we could land and then I had my trunk and valise put aboard of a carriage with one horse and taken to a Hotel where I found myself in this great city swarming with humanity and so foreign in all its surroundings that it seemed like being in a foreign country and for the first time I felt lonely. My first enquiries were of course about Texas and the answers were by no means reassuring. The news was that the Alamo at San Antonio containing Col. Travis Col. David Crockett and nearly 200 men had been taken by the Mexicans on the 6th of March and all had been slaughtered, and in a few days the news came by Col. Fisher that Fannin with his whole force had surrendered to Santa Anna as prisoners of war and that all the prisoners had been slaughtered in cold blood by order of Santa Anna, that the Texans and Houston were retreating before Santa Anna's victorious army and the people were fleeing from the country by every means at hand. I found that there was a small schooner that had been chartered by Wm. Bryan a friend of Texas and that she would sail for Galveston as soon as a sufficient number of volunteers would come forward to man her. I immediately put my name down as one and waited patiently as I could for the necessary number to be made up, and in the mean time looked around the city as well as I could, as I suffered intensely during my whole stay with neuralgia in my face and teeth.

I found a few very excellent buildings and some very fine ones building. The stores are principally built with open fronts supported by stone columns which make a very pretty appearance. The St. Charles Theatre and Exchange are handsome buildings. At the St. Chas theatre they brought about 30 horses on the stage every thing was in splendid style but I did not like the acting very much. The news from Texas still continued of the gloomiest kind every day brought women and children by land and water who had run away from the Mexicans. Reports of the retreat of Houston this side of the Brazos and that the Mexicans would certainly over run the country constantly came in and it was very difficult to get men enough to man our vessel, as no body knew whether we would find Galveston in the hands of the Mexicans or Texans. At last on the 13th of April we got about 25 men who agreed to go and I sent my traps on board cast my lot with the 20 odd as determined men as I have ever seen together before or since. The few acquaintances which I had made tried hard to dissuade me from going, saying that the Gulf of Mexico was swarming with Mexican Cruisers and that our little vessel would stand no show with a Mexican armed vessel and that even if we succeeded in running the gauntlet through them we would very likely find Galveston in the hands of the enemy and that it would be great odds against my finding my Mother and brother even if we succeeded in getting there, but anything was preferable to me rather than doing nothing and waiting.

Our vessel the lay nearly along side of the Mexican armed schooner the Venus a beautiful top sail schooner with a 12 pounder a long 9 and 6 six pounders and 40 men waiting to be put aboard at the Belise. We had with captain and crew about 30 men 2 six pounders and plenty of muskets and ammunition. It was said this Mexican schooner would follow us out.

On the 14th [April] we left the levee in the afternoon and dropped down to the Magazine and took in powder. I had a fine view of the N. O. Battleground and saw the tree under which Sir Edw Packingham breathed his last.

15th dropping down with the current but the wind was contrary and drove us frequently ashore. 16th passed the two forts on the river both handsome places. I took my first lesson as a sailor and climbed to the mast head to get a good view. We were now able to use our sails and beat down the river criss crossing

until we made our way out into the Gulf without a pilot and on the morning of the 17th I found myself for the first time on the broad Gulf but the water was still muddy. 18th the water begins to look blue but we had a calm nearly all day towards evening the wind blew fresh and we began to make real headway. 19th I came on deck in the morning and met a splendid scene, the waves ran high and we were tossed about like a feather on the broad deep all day, the wind blew hard and I sat up in the stern of the vessel in the moonlight until late at night and watched the effects of the moonlight on the mighty waves, and thought of the many past scenes and the friends I had left and the happy days I had spent with them. Would I ever see them again. would I ever reach my dear Mother and brother in that land now may be in the possession of that ruthless enemy. I would occasionally scan the sea to see whether the Venus or any of her tribe were after us, but nothing in sight. We went along merrily, the wind blew hard, some times we were tossed high up in the air on a huge wave and then sunk down in the trough of the sea as though to hide us from our enemies. The water was sometimes thrown all over the vessel and looked like liquid fire. I finally turned in. Next morning the 20 we saw land which we supposed was Galveston but it proved to be high Island Toward evening as we ran along the coast we saw sails ahead which proved to be vessels in Galveston When we got near enough we fired three guns and saw a Steam Boat in the bay coming towards us but she soon altered her course and went in an opposite direction very much to our disappointment and the captain fearing we would get in the breakers had to alter our course and run back some distance when we anchorod.

21st. [April] Early in the morning I was awakened by the racket on deck and hurried up to ascertain the cause; Two sails were pointed out to me in the distance and the Capt. of the vessel was very much excited. We were in rather a fix We did not know whether Galveston was in the possession of friends or enemies, we thought the two armies must by this time have had a decisive battle but in whose favor it had terminated we had no means of knowing. If we were in a quandary, when we saw the two vessels making towards us the Capt. was in consternation when another hove in sight and soon after another, completely cutting us off. Who or what they were we did not know. One was certainly made out to

be the dreaded Venus by the terrified captain who said he knew her appearance well, and of course we judged if she was an enemy all the others were also. The Captain who I believe was the most scared of any on board was for running the vessel ashore. We would not allow him to do that and threatened if he undertook it to throw him over board—our little squad had elected a man by the name of Graham our Captain, who was as determined a man as ever walked. He was a good sailor too— We tried to prevail on the master of the vessel to get up his anchor but he would not and we determined to wait until we could make out what the vessels were and if they were enemies we would place our captain in Command of the vessel. There we were anchored on the tossing Gulf surrounded by vessels as likely to be friends as foes. No place of retreat except by running on a shore that might contain enemies or friends and be welcomed by fellow countrymen or by the minions of Santa Anna as more victims of his cruelty. We determined to abide the sea and take our chances with the vessels surrounding us let it be life or death— then it was I saw the true spirit of Americans break out. Never shall I forget that scene. Altho we could not know the actual danger we had every reason to expect the worst. Every man and boy (I was the youngest of the lot) pledged himself if attacked never to yield to the Mexicans “for,” said the captain of the little band “if you yield to them it will only be to swing at the yard-arm for the amusement of the d—d savages, as for me they shall never take Me alive” “Nor Me” “Nor Me” was echoed from all the band. The captain (Graham) had decided that if we were attacked we would immediately run foul of the nearest vessel and board with our muskets with fixed bayonets and try and get possession of the armed vessel and turn her guns on the enemy or escape by out sailing them. We each were prepared with 5 or 6 loaded muskets lying ready to be taken up and discharged as we should approach near enough to shoot down anyone who should show in sight, it was very exciting as we waited for developments and ran up the stars and stripes this was answered by the same flag appearing on the vessel nearest us. But we knew the treachery of the Mexicans and were not assured until she also ran up the single star, then two of the other vessels followed suit and we knew we were with our friends and we up anchor and sailed for the harbor one of the vessels which proved to be a Texas armed

schooner sent us a pilot "Old Canty," who brought us into port and before we anchored a boat from the shore came aboard with a fine looking old gentleman evidently a Mexican, who proved to be Gen Lorenzo Zavala vice President of Texas, being so young I suppose I attracted his attention for he came and spoke to [me] and I asked him if he knew any one of my name and [he] said 'yes' he did and giving the name of my mother and brother. I told him who I was and the old man took [me] right in his arms and said "oh how astonished and delighted they will be, you must go right ashore with me in my boat." So ashore we went and walked arm in arm chatting as we went up to my Mothers tent. I did not look up until I got near, when my mother,—who had just remar[k]ed that Gen. Zavalla had found a friend— caught sight of my face and jumped and caught me and screamed "its Lew its Lew" and I was soon surrounded by a lot of her friends. My brother Clinton soon joined us and I felt happy. Here I found the "Government" consisting of President David G. Burnett, Gen Zavala and a few other officials and a small number of armed men so that our little band was quite an acquisition as we did not know where Houston's army was and the last that was heard of the Mexicans was that they were marching in two divisions, one in the interior and one on the coast the latter under Filasola who was at the mouth of the Brazos only about 40 miles from us, and might attack us at any time. I found them all camped in tents at the extreme eastern end of the Island which was a mere sand spit a few feet above the level of the water. The only drinking water was quite brackish, about a hundred men altogether was the only defense against an army.

We were all enrolled for duty and took our regular turn standing guard and patrolling the Island. I went on this duty at once and being furnished with a good horse rode back and forth across the Island for a distance of 15 miles towards the west end and remained out until day break when I was relieved—there was one apology for a house about a mile from the point which had been used as a custom house but was but a mere shell. it stood near where the house that was built by Lafitte out of mahogany logs on[c]e stood but which had been used for steamboat wood. I amused myself during the day by hearing the stories of my mother and the ladies with her most of whose husbands had been massacred by the

Mexicans after they had surrendered. Among them was Mrs. Captain Westover whose husband fell with Col. Fannin at Goliad, Mrs. Mather whose husband was killed at the same time—Mrs. Zavala the wife of the V. P. Miss Rebecca—afterwards Mrs. Cloud—and then we walked on the beach which was a beautiful beach and walked up to the house, the remains of Lafitte's ditches around his fort were still plainly to be seen. At night I either stood guard and to my rounds with my musket on my shoulder for 2 hours on and 4 off, crying every half hour "Alls well" or went on picket duty on horseback scouting through the Island to notify of the approach of an enemy. I had two men with me one a French man who could not understand a word I said. This was the 25th. I put the Frenchman in the middle of the Island and the other near the Bay while I kept the beach. In this order we went up about 14 miles but saw nothing and heard nothing but the mournful noise of the waves as they came rushing on the beach and occasionally the scream of some sea bird as it started frightened up before me and winged his way over the broad expanse of the Gulf. About 3 o'clock A. M. I turned back and reached the custom house where I found my fellow guards wrapped in their blankets enjoying a sweet sleep. I followed their example and rolled myself in my blanket and laid myself in an old cart and got a short nap before reporting at head quarters.

On the morning of the 26th, a man came ashore in a small boat—he afterwards proved to be Ben C. Franklin—and called out, "All who want to hear good news come to the Public tent" It was soon surrounded and we were told that Houston had given Santa Anna battle and had whipped him, killed 700 and taken as many prisoners, together with Santa Anna, Coss, Almonte and all the principal officers. the news was so good that we could hardly credit it until it was officially confirmed. About noon of the same day the alarm was given that 300 Mexican cavalry were coming down the Island not 5 miles off. every man was called to arms, and each one had his bayonet buckled on and his musket on his shoulder. I took my mother and the Battersons in a boat to the Steam Boat and hurried back to the expected scene of action—Nearer and nearer they were said to be coming and it would be but a few minutes before I would be for the first time engaged in mortal combat with my fellow man; it is a singular feeling for one who has just left

a peaceful land, but the memory of the recent atrocities of the Mexicans nerved the hearts of every one and I believe there was a real disappointment with a majority of the men when after waiting for some time they did not come. The courier who bro't the news of the battle said that Santa Anna had said that he should not wonder if the courier should find the Island occupied by Mejia's Cavalry as they were marching for the Island when he last heard from them, but they did not come, and our men did not have an opportunity to show what they were made of. Some of our own people had been mistaken for Mexicans.

It may be judged how I felt when the news came that the Mexicans were coming. I knew if it was true that I must have been very near their camp when I was 14 miles up the Island at 3 o'clock in the morning, but I did not believe it was true and said so, altho I knew it might be so, as being night I could not have seen them very far off. After everything became settled mother concluded to go back to Harrisburg on the Steam Boat which was going up then. So we went on board and slept that night and the 27th. got our things on board. 28th boat was detained 29th. the President came on board. Mother and Clinton endeavored to get an order for some sugar and coffee from the President but failed. I went to the President and told him that that sugar and coffee came over in the vessel that I did and it was contributed by the people of N. O. for those who needed it and we must have some and after a good many words he gave me the order and I gave it to my brother who remained behind in order to go to Anahuac for the goods Mother had left there when running from the Mexicans She had left Harrisburg—not long before the Mexicans took the place and burned it—on a little sloop which had taken her to Anahuac at the head of the eastern branch of the Bay there she had landed what few things she saved and walked down the Bay towards Galveston and was taken by a passing boat to Galveston where she was joined by my brother who had been sent on some Govt. service and where she found the Govt.

We run up the bay to Red Fish Bar where we lay all night. 30th went on up to the Camp of the Army on Buffalo Bayou opposite the Battle ground passed Zavala's house where there were 300 or 400 Mexican prisoners among whom were Gen Cos and a number of officers Gen Cos was standing on the bank looking at

us. When we were passing the prisoners at Zavalas the Capt. fired a cannon over their heads which made them almost fall to the ground.

When we arrived at Gen. Houston's camp I went on shore and up into the camp. I went into the small house where Santa Anna and Gen. Almonte were confined and well guarded, both to prevent Santa Anna's escape and to prevent his being assassinated. Some of the wives of those whom he had murdered in cold blood would have shot him if they ever could have had the opportunity. I saw him and Almonte with some servants. He looked very much cast down, both were rather fine looking men but I thought Almonte the finest looking. Santa Anna did not look to me like a great General or one to dictate to a nation. He was dressed in a Black frock Coat dark pants and military vest. I could not but reflect from what a height he had fallen. Now a humbled man before men, but a few short months before he was at the head of a nation a second Napoleon as he boasted, and was going to overrun Texas and leave it a barren waste, and now he was cooped up in a little hut a prisoner afraid of his life for he knew that after all his massacres of prisoners he rightly deserved death, his army also prisoners and made so by about one third of his own force of men poorly armed and no provisions except a little corn and beef that they gathered as they went.

Gen. Houston lay on his couch his wounded leg resting on a stool reading over letters, orders etc. which were constantly handed him. He was a great contrast to Santa Anna, a large powerfully built man with commanding features broad high forehead, gray hair and looks like a General. His dress was half Indian half frontiersman, altogether a very striking man. He was evidently suffering from his wounded leg as he was quite irritable and impatient.

One of the soldiers guided me over a portion of the battle ground which presented a horrible appearance in places where the fight was thickest—the Mexicans were unburied and lay where they fell scattered over a large expanse—one place they with a few dead horses filled a small stream or bayou where their bodies formed a bridge on which the Texans crossed over. Now they were more or less decomposed but not as much so as I would have supposed as the sun appeared to dry them up. Along the edge of the bay

many had tried to escape as their bodies were seen some mired in the mud others floating in the stagnant water. Altogether it was a ghastly sight and I was very willing to leave it. The Texans were a fair lot of Americans, such as could be gathered together in almost any part of the country, they were illy clad, without any pretense to uniform and carried all kinds of arms some shot guns some long and some short rifles carbines muskets, some with bayonets and some without. Some had pistols, some without, but they were all in good humor and justly proud of their achievements and when I told some of them how hard I had tried to be with them they said I was one of them.

I will here say that the Steamer which we saw when off Galveston was on its way up to meet Houston with what few men could be spared but they of course did not get there until after the battle.

May 1st. We proceeded in the Steamer up Buffalo Bayou which is a large handsome stream of tide water having many handsome situations on its banks. As we passed we saw a number of dead Mexicans floating in the stream with upturned black faces people laughing and talking about them with no more concern than tho' they had been dumb animals.

We arrived at Harrisburg or its remains, the place having been burned by the Mexicans but a short time before. It is a beautiful location the banks gently sloping down to the bayou and the woods all around filled with magnolia trees in full bloom. I went to work with the help of a man and put up a tent for the accommodation of mother and myself until we could go into a house—the only one in that part of the country—put up our tent on the banks of the bayou under a large magnolia tree.

2d. [May] Went out to the house in the prairie and took a look at it and at the ruins left by the burning of the place.

3d. Hired two or three negroes to pack our things out to the house and worked hard all day. The Steam Boat (Yellowstone) on which we came up returned to Galveston, which left us pretty much alone. We got into our new quarters, the house was a frame with good floor and good roof and sided up with rough boards, good door but no glass in windows.

4th. I commenced to make bedsteads by building them in each corner of the room by setting a post for one corner and nailing

a railing from the studding to it and nailing another rail to the studding and then I got boards and laid across. My mother made bedticks out of domestic sheeting and I cut prairie grass and filled them so we had very comfortable beds, but we had no dishes except one or two cups, no flour, got some corn and ground on a steel mill. the army from San Jacinto came up and camped near us.

5th. Laid up the fence about the house and worked at fixing up things generally.

6th. My brother Clinton came back from Anahuac and brought with him a Mexican prisoner named Guadealoupe.

7th. Part of the Army left. Clinton, the Mexican and myself brought out the things which he had brought with him.

8 The remainder of the army left. Capt. [name omitted] said he thought he could find some things which he had [cached] on the opposite side of the bayou when the army passed to go to San Jacinto. So we went in search of them and after several disappointments he finally found the place and we unearthed what was to us a great treasure we found knives and forks, spoons, tin cups and plates, cups and saucers and plates enough for 6 or 7 people and we felt very rich and went back in triumph. I took the Mexican and with an old horse we picked up I commenced plowing for a crop of corn and put in some garden seeds. We got some provisions. My brother went and got another Mexican prisoner named José and we spent this month in fixing ourselves as comfortable as we could. Went out with my rifle to see if I could find some game and saw a deer and stepped behind a tree. I raised up my rifle to take aim on the deer but got the "buck ague" so bad that I could not hold my gun steady enough to shoot. I took my gun down and determined that I would not give way to any such nonsense—I poked my gun out from the tree and took deliberate aim and down came *my first deer*. I was as proud as though I had found a gold mine and after considerable trouble I dressed it and got it lashed on to my horse back of the saddle, and went home in triumph. Indians frequently brought large wild turkeys which we bought for 25 cents a piece. We would make cutlets of the breast and give the balance to our Mexican servants.

In June Mr. Dobie wanted me to go to Calcasieu La. and get some valuable papers which he had sent there to be out of reach

of the Mexicans, and I was anxious to go. He furnished me a good Mexican horse, saddle, bridle and portmanteau. I strapped a pair of blankets behind my saddle and with a good pair of pistols in my holsters I was ready for anything that might turn up. The first day I went to Lynchburg and took the road that a part of Santa Annas army made in going to San Jacinto and rode over the battle ground again. The bodies of most of the dead Mexicans were still lying where they had fallen and were being dried up by the sun, the wild animals did not appear to molest them. From Lynchburg opposite the battle ground I found only one house, which was deserted, until I got to Liberty on the Trinity river, after leaving there I found places where I could get accommodations about every 25 or 30 miles. At one place known as "Yeo-kum" at the end of a ride across the prairie of about 30 miles as I was nearing the place I saw coming by a foot path evidently to intercept me a beautiful young girl. As everybody was anxious about the news and especially from those coming from the west I stopped my horse and in answer to her questions told her what I knew of the movements of the troops &c., she then said well you will come up to our house and stay all night won't you, pointing to a very inviting looking place standing on a slight eminence a short distance from the road.¹ I had been warned against this very place, and told that it would be as much as my horse was worth if not my life if I stopped there. So although I was sorely tempted to accept the young ladys invitation prudence prevailed and I excused myself by saying that an old friend of mine from the west was stopping at the house only a short distance away and he never would forgive me if I did not stop with him. And she reluctantly turned towards home. This of course was made up by me as I only knew that there was a family who had run away from the Mexicans and who were stopping at this house. So I went there and told the man what I had told the young lady and he said he would take me in and verify what I had said. After I had been there a while an old negro of Yoakum came on an idle

¹A *Stray Yankee in Texas*, by Philip Paxton, published 1853, gives an account of Yokum's place, "Pine Island Prairie" in the lower part of Eastern Texas, and tells of his manner of entertaining unwary travelers. Eventually, a body of citizens fully convinced of the enormity of his crimes, succeeded in capturing him; "they informed him that his time had come, and giving him one short half hour to repent the villainies of a long lifetime, shot him through the heart."

errand to see how I had disposed of my horse, which I had taken around in a back yard and fed under the window where I was to sleep. I took the lariat thro' the window when I went to bed and slept with it in my hand. I stopped one night with Mr. Beaumont who took a great interest in me and gave me very minute directions about heading or going around the sources of a number of bayous. this was very necessary as there were no roads and the cow paths run in every direction and I had two days journey without a house. the first night from there I camped in a dense swamp between these bayous. I built too large fires and spread my mosquito net between them and tied my horse near me and gave him his feed of barley and after eating my supper which I had bro't with me from Mr. Beaumonts and making several ineffectual attempts to crawl under my mosquito net and leave the mosquitoes out, I finally got settled in my blankets with my saddle for my pillow, but the persevering mosquitoes would manage to get in and it was a long time before I got to sleep. I was startled from my sleep by an unearthly whoop and shriek, but I gave this to the credit of owls, then I heard the unmistakable sound of wolves barking and howling, and an occasional shriek of a panther, but I knew my fire would keep them at a distance so I managed to get considerable sleep, but several times got up and replenished my fires, but I spent anything but a pleasant night and was glad when morning came and I resumed my journey. I finally got to my destination got my papers and after resting my horse a day I started on my return. I was told by Mr. Beaumont that by the time I returned he would have a flat boat on the river which would ferry me around the mouth of these bayous and altho it would be 5 or 6 miles ferriage it would save a long distance of travel and I determined to return that way. It came very near costing me dearly, and had I known what I would encounter I would have taken my chances another night with the wild animals and mosquitoes in the swamp. On arriving at the Sabine River as I was emerging from the pine woods I saw a man of rather rough appearance who had come out of a small house on the bank of the river coming towards me, he had a brace and bit in his hand and I noticed as he came nearer that he appeared to be quite drunk. I threw the flap off my holster, as he commenced flourishing the brace and bit around and as he came in reach he

grabbed my horse by the bridle and stopped him, at the same time saying in a maudlin way "I'll be d—d if—I dont—bore—you through." He had not got the last word out of his mouth before I had my cocked pistol within 3 feet of his head and I replied, "let go there or I'll be d—d if I dont blow the top of your head off." The man was sobered in an instant, he dropped the reins and nearly dropped his brace and bit, and straightening up cried "don't shoot, I beg pardon, it was all a joke—no harm was intended &c." I replied, still holding my pistol in my hand that this was a bad country and this was a bad time to play off such jokes and that it had nearly cost him his life, as I should have fired on the instant if he had not dropped my bridle, but that as he said no harm was intended I accepted his apology. He asked me to go by the house, which was a mere shanty where they sold whiskey, and take a drink with him. I pretended to be very cool and indifferent but I was far from feeling so. I had just ridden 20 miles without a house, and was now at the ferry where we had to ferry 5 or 6 miles possibly against the tide, and it was nearly sun down and there was no place to stay except in this doggery; however, I told the man, certainly, I would go with him and take a drink and slipping my pistol still cocked into my holster I stopped at the place, and was asked to alight. I replied no, I would drink from horse if they would be kind enough to hand it to me, which they did, at the same time saying, that I must certainly stay over night with them that it was too late to undertake to ferry so far, and they knew the old negro would not take me over. I replied that I wanted very much to reach Mr. Beaumonts that night as I had friends there expecting me, who would certainly come to look after me if I did not come, and I did not want to put them to that trouble, and I would ride down to the ferry about 200 yards and see whether the ferrymen would put me over, if not I would come back and stay with them, which I presumed I would have to do. So, I bid them good evening and rode down to the ferry boat and rode my horse into it, went back to the chain and commenced to unfasten the boat and called out to the old negro. "Come uncle, I want to cross." "Please God Massa I can't put you over to-night—tide is agin us and we can't make it." "Come on," I said—"I am going anyhow, jump in," and I threw off the chain, and as he bundled into the boat I put

a 2½ piece in his hand and said we must make it, and he took the oars and I took the steering oar and we struck out, the men at the doggery looking at us evidently non plussed at my getting away. We made Mr. Beaumonts after a hard row late in the night, but the old gentleman got up and had my horse attended to and had me some supper. When I told how I came to be so late and of my adventure, he said "My God, my dear boy, what an escape you have had, why that is the most desperate and notorious robber and murderer on the border,—it is only a month or so ago that he killed a man in the same way that he attacked you and took horse, money and equipments, and the officers on both sides of the line are looking after him, if you had not acted as you did he certainly would have taken your horse if he had not killed you. What a pity you had not killed him." "I am sorry I did not know it," I replied, "I could have killed him as easy as not." I suppose all that saved me was that he did not expect I could cross the river and if I remained all night he could finish me at his leisure.

I must say I did not feel very comfortable when I reflected what a risk I had run, even if I had got away with my life. I might have been left afoot several hundred miles from home in a strange country with no organized authorities, for as yet there were no county governments and officers, but I went to bed and slept soundly ready next morning to pursue my journey homewards. I stopped again with my old new found friend near the Yokum place, concluding not to place myself within the wiles of the young beauty who had come out to meet me. I confess that it was with considerable reluctance that I came to this conclusion as they were rather scarce at that time in Texas. I had a dull monotonous ride over the endless prairies. It rained in torrents and the only sound I heard was the "chug" "chug" and "splash" "splash" of the horse as he made his way through the water covered prairie, and the different voices of the frogs, some of which had the cry varying from the young lamb up to a yearling calf. At last in the middle of a wide prairie my horse began to lag and I thought he was going to "give out." So, taking pity on him I thought I would foot it a while and give him a rest and got off and tried to lead him, but as he was averse to being led I let my lariat out full length and drove him ahead of me. I got up rather close he thought to his heels and he forgot himself and let drive

with both feet, throwing the mud and water all over me. I concluded that if he could kick in that way he could carry me and so I remounted and he evidently thought he had betrayed himself as he went off as fresh as ever. I came to a deserted cabin in the edge of the prairie and concluded to occupy it for the night. I stripped my horse and staked him out to good grass and took my dripping things into the cabin. I found the powder in my pistols so wet that I could not fire them, and my powder also so damp that I could not get fire in the pan in my pistols. So, I had to adopt the primitive way of producing fire by friction, rubbing two dry sticks together did not work, so I improvised a bow by tying a piece of cord at one end of a strong twig and stretching it to the other end making a bow. I took a dry piece of board and laid it on the floor and dug out a hole in it with my knife. I then took another piece of dry board and split off a piece about 8 inches long and sharpened it at each end after making it tolerably round. I took another small piece of board and made a hole a little way into it to hold the upper end of my rounded stick. I took a turn around this stick with my bow and had my machine ready. I placed one end of my stick in the hole in the board after placing around it the dryest and finest materials I could find in the old house. Having placed one end of the stick in the hole, I took the piece of board in my left hand, placing the end with the hole on top of the stick to hold it in place, and with my bow I commenced whirling the round stick around back and forth, pressing it down with my left hand. It did not take long before it began to smoke and to my delight the materials surrounding my stick caught into a blaze, and I soon had a roaring fire in the old fire place, for there was plenty of material, but you may be sure I did not need any for my personal warmth just then, for with the exertion and anxiety about success I was pretty warm; however, I got my blankets and everything strung about the fire and by the time I was ready to lie down I was quite comfortably fixed. I had read somewhere of this method of producing fire but this is the first time I ever tried it. [Diagram of fire-producing machine on margin.] I happened to have good materials in the old house or I should have found it more difficult. After I had warmed up my somewhat damaged provisions which I had bro't from my last stopping place I rolled myself up in my now dry blankets and had

a very comfortable night. I started again early next morning and soon came to a creek swollen by the rains so that it was not fordable. I disliked very much to have my clothes all again wet after so much trouble drying them especially as it had ceased raining. Someone had cut a tree and felled it across the creek near the crossing but it was quite small. I succeeded in crossing on it, after taking off my clothes, and got my horse over, but as I got in the middle of the stream the tree bent under my weight so that I had to wade in the water on the tree nearly up to my knees; this required good balancing, especially as the tree sprung up and down with every step, it was more like walking a tight rope than anything else; but I managed to get everything over in good shape until my last trip with my saddle on my back. I got about the middle of the stream, the water rushing past me, the tree bobbing up and down, and swaying with the stream I lost my balance, and in I went, saddle and all. I hung on to that, and righted myself and made the shore, after being carried a little way down the stream, none the worse for my swim. I had no more adventures and got back safely with my books and papers, all right, except for a little wetting, and to the great relief of my Mother, who had been loth to let me go.